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THE ORIENTAL FLOWERING CHERRIES CEVED

A radio presentation by W. R. Beattie, Bureau of APRaht 1938stay, delivered in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home
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Among the many ornamental plants of the gardens of Japan, none have occupied a higher place in the esteem of the people of that country than the flowering cherries which are their national flower. A little of the oriental beauty of Japan has been transferred to America in the form of importations of these wonderful flowering cherries. One of the most famous of these plantings is located right here in Washington, in Potomac Park, around what we call the Tidal Basin and along the drives and walks in the parkways along the Potomac River.

Every year when these cherry trees are in blossom thousands of people come to Washington to see them. There is quite an interesting story back of this collection of flowering cherry trees for in 1912, through the generosity of the city of Tokio, more than 2,000 trees, including several of the finest varieties known to Japanese gardeners, were presented to the city of Washington by the mayor of Tokio and were planted in Potomac Park.

The Yoshino, the earliest flowering variety of this collection, is now in full bloom and fully a week ahead of its normal blooming schedule. The blossoms of this variety usually last about a week unless injured by frost or heavy rains. Other varieties follow the Yoshino so that the blossoming period for the oriental cherries in Potomac Park usually extends over a period of nearly a month.

To my mind the Yoshino with its millions of single blossoms makes a finer showing than the later varieties some of which have double flowers, but the mass effect of the blossoms and the reflection in the water of the tidal basin is very fine. From several points around the south side of the basin one gets the full reflection of the Washington monument framed in blossoms.

Any of you folks who chance to be in this part of the country during the time the oriental cherries are in blossom will, I am sure, feel well repaid if you drop in on us and see these splendid blossoms, besides. Washington is a very beautiful city, especially at this season of the year when everything is springing into new life. The latchstring is out and we invite you to visit Washington and the cherry blossoms.

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